

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE

Thursday, July 8, 2010
House Hearing Room 4 - 1:30 P.M.

Chairman Maguire called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. and attendance was noted by the secretary.

1. Call to order

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman
Dr. John Baracy
Ms. Margaret Dugan
Ms. Johanna Haver
Ms. Anna Rosas

Absent:

Mr. Jim DiCello
Dr. Eugene Garcia
Ms. Eileen Klein
Ms. Karen Merritt

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

2. Approval of June 10, 2010 minutes of the ELL Task Force meeting

The minutes were held.

3. Review and discussion of Alternate Proposed Model presented by Tempe Union High School District

Mr. Maguire stated that the Task Force is not ready to make a decision on the Tempe Union alternate model but would like to discuss it and pose some questions. Mr. Maguire stated that he has spent some time going through the model. The gist of the requested change is that it is similar to the Phoenix Union model. It allows an Intermediate student to take a portion of the Reading class and use a content based material for the Reading class. This will help the students move toward graduation more rapidly. He stated that the Tempe Union model deals with both Basic and Intermediate students and both the Reading and Writing portions of the English Language Development (ELD) requirement. Mr. Maguire stated that there are separate questions on whether the model should be applicable to both Basics and Intermediates and on whether the model should be applicable to both Reading and Writing. He questioned what the appropriate

content materials would be to use in such a class. Mr. Maguire stated that he looked through the data to see how the students have done in past. Mr Maguire stated that there are a few things that would be helpful for the Task Force to review. He stated that in specific sections, the model talked about certain English language objectives. It stated that the idea is to demonstrate ELD (English Language Development) skills based on materials. He stated that when he was at HISEP (High Intensity Summer ELD Program), he looked at the students' work and he could see a dramatic change. He had reviewed the work in their black and white composition books and there was a dramatic improvement from the beginning to the end of the class. Some examples from students would be helpful to see the goals and objectives. He stated that it is his understanding that Tempe Union was doing this model last school year, so maybe the Task Force can get some student examples. He also stated that he understands that Tempe Union will be mixing Intermediates and Basics in the same classroom (i.e. in the same history or health class). Mr. Maguire stated that it is also not entirely true that they'll be mixing grades. Sometimes the students are mixed, sometimes they are not. Next, Mr. Maguire asked if they are using the same text as in the mainstream classroom.

Ms. Kate Glenn stated they are also using additional supplementary materials but the textbook is the same.

Mr. Maguire stated he'd like to see the ELD testing materials compared with the mainstream classroom and the ELD classroom. He would like to compare what is happening in the mainstream classroom versus the ELD classroom.

Mr Hoffland clarified that Mr. Maguire is looking for examples of the tests, rather than for the test results.

Ms. Glenn clarified that Mr. Maguire is looking for examples from both the ELD and mainstream classrooms.

Mr. Maguire reiterated that this would be an easier way to see what is going on in the classroom, rather than simply looking at lesson plans. Then finally, Mr. Maguire stated that he thinks it would be helpful to see the educational histories of the students. This is based on the testimony of the students at the last meeting. Mr. Maguire stated that when students get to high school, the assumption is that there are fewer ELL students left. He stated that the one young man who testified at the last Task Force meeting had been in the U.S. a relatively short period of time. Mr. Maguire stated that a student in the ninth grade who has been here since kindergarten and is Basic is very different than a student who is from a non-English speaking country and has been here for 18 months and is an Intermediate. The performance information is enlightened by having some information about the students' histories. That one young man who testified at the Task Force was very enthusiastic about his experience at Tempe High School. Last, Mr.

Maguire stated that he presumed Tempe Union had looked at the Phoenix Union Model as it offers some guidance and insight into mixing content and ELD. Mr. Maguire stated that it might be worth talking to the OELAS staff regarding the Phoenix Union model. The Phoenix Union model did evolve into what was ultimately adopted by the Task Force. Mr. Maguire stated that he had one last comment. The submission was very thorough and it was very helpful. He appreciated the thoroughness of the model. He stated that the Task Force looks forward to working with Tempe Union. Mr. Maguire stated that reading through the Tempe Union model has raised other questions about the high school students and the language arts requirement as it corresponds to the language proficiency standards. The work in the Tempe Union submission helps in ongoing review by the Task Force.

4. Discussion regarding upcoming annual review of models of Structured English Immersion

Mr. Maguire stated that once a year the English Language Learners Task Force is required to review the models as delineated in statute. This will likely happen in the fall because the Task Force relies on information from the monitoring exercise. The Department is in the process of compiling this data and this will take a couple of months. Mr. Maguire asked the Task Force members if there is anything the Department needs to look at in order to review the models.

Ms. Dugan stated that although the data hasn't been analyzed yet, she believes the analysis will be positive. The model has been implemented for two years now and many of the districts have implemented it with fidelity. Ms. Dugan stated that as part of the annual review, she would like the Task Force to begin looking at the second year students who score at the Intermediate level and maybe providing them with an alternate model, especially for students in the middle and high school levels. She stated that she feels very positive about the four hours, especially for students in the first year of English Language Development classes. Ms. Dugan proposed that the Task Force looks at students' reclassification rates and that OELAS bring in practitioners from the field that have great reclassification rates, are positive about the four hours, and have implemented the models with fidelity. She wondered what a second year model could look like for students. She stated that the second year could really look different, especially at the middle and high school levels. Ms. Dugan stated that the reality is that a high school diploma is important but they need the skills. She stated that the Task Force needs to bring practitioners to the table to work with OELAS and show the Task Force what the second year could look like for Intermediate students at least for the middle and high school levels. Ms. Dugan stated that the law states that students are supposed to get out in one year, but some take longer. Ms. Dugan stated that she didn't know if two years of four hours is necessary for the second year. Ms. Dugan stated that she hasn't been a principal in the schools for eight years, so it would be great to bring in practitioners for this next stage.

Dr. Baracy stated that he supports Ms. Dugan's statements and would like to see a larger sample from the practitioners. He would also like to hear about some of the challenges in the field.

Ms. Rosas stated that high schools have concerns about the students receiving enough credits to graduate. She would like to look into the number of students that are unable to graduate because of the models.

Ms. Haver asks that the Task Force look at something different for the second year. She stated that it is very important to maintain high motivation.

Ms. Dugan emphasized the importance of the four hours of ELD in the first year. Students in elementary schools and the first year of high school as an ELL still need the four hours. The four hours of ELD benefits the students so that they can exit the program as soon as possible.

Ms. Haver asked what the average class size is at Tempe Union High School District.

Mr. Hoffland stated that the average class size at Tempe Union High School District is 26 to 1.

Ms. Rosas asked if the four hours of ELD is presented intensely in the beginning, does it work? She stated that the four hours is not intended to be for the life of the student, but that the intent is to help students get to proficiency as quickly as possible.

Ms. Dugan stated that districts can provide a minimum of four hours of ELD instruction, and can also provide additional hours of instruction.

Dr. Baracy asked if the Department can share what they have in mind regarding what they will be preparing for the Task Force.

Ms. Santa Cruz stated the Department would present data regarding the monitoring findings. The Department will also bring back feedback from the PELL meetings.

Dr. Baracy asked if there will be a data comparison. He stated he would like to see that.

Ms. Santa Cruz stated the department can do data a data comparison. She also stated that it is important to hear from field.

Dr. Baracy asked how this information is being assembled.

Ms. Santa Cruz stated that there is monitoring information, teacher interviews, staff talks to coordinators at PELL meetings, and staff answers questions from the field.

Mr. Maguire stated that the Task Force needs to look at a review of time allocations in the model based upon the English Language Proficiency standards. He stated that the Task Force may want to find better use of those times, particularly in the upper grades with regards to the English language arts portion. This may be the perfect opportunity to blend content with English Language Development. Again, the Tempe Union model raises that issue. He also stated that he thinks the Department will have better student performance data this year. Each year the data will get better and better. The proficiency rates will explain a lot. The Task Force heard from some of the practitioners regarding the need for a greater focus on grammar. Mr. Maguire stated that it is helpful to hear that from practitioners, and in particular, students. In the model, the Task Force needs to look at three categories of students. First, the Task Force needs to look at those students on ILLPs. They are becoming a dominant part of the program. Mr. Maguire asked if they are working. Another category of students the Task Force needs to review is kindergarten students. They need to look at the relationship between incoming versus exiting kindergartens and their progression and that progression vis a vis mainstream students. Kindergarten complicated the model with regards to the grade spans. Also the Task Force needs to look at special needs students. This area is more complicated because of the laws there. Also, the Task Force needs to explore content issues and the relationship to ELD at the upper grade-levels. And finally, the Task Force needs to better track and understand how students maintain proficiency and why some maintain proficiency and others do not. The Task Force needs to explore if there is a causal relationship and if we can modify our curriculum. Mr. Maguire stated that the Task Force also needs to review where we go next with training. He complimented the Department on the training but it needs to be looked at again. Also regarding implementation, Mr. Maguire stated that the Task Force needs to give direction to the Department regarding monitoring. That which you monitor will be done; and, that which you don't monitor will not be done.

Ms. Dugan stated she would like to look at districts with similar demographics and learn why some are succeeding and others are not. She stated that the Task Force needs to push forward those districts that aren't doing well.

Mr. Maguire agreed that would help.

Dr. Baracy stated as the Task Force looks at relationships of successes and challenges, they need to look at the cost per pupil.

Ms. Haver wondered regarding cost why the universities can't offer the training we are paying for at the department. She stated that it is quite a waste.

Ms. Dugan stated they are supposed to. The new teachers are given the credentials from the universities.

Ms. Haver stated there is a problem with grammar instruction. She also asked why the Department needs to keep training these teachers.

Ms. Rosas stated some teachers may be coming from other states and are not going through the Arizona universities.

Mr. Maguire stated that teachers will always be moving around throughout the course of their careers.

Ms. Haver stated she was from Wyoming and had to take courses when she became a teacher in Arizona.

Ms. Rosas stated that this may require changes in certification.

Mr. Maguire stated that this is another area that we can look into.

5. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities

Mr. Maguire stated that this is the 52nd meeting of this Task Force. This is the fourth year anniversary of the Task Force. The most important aspect is that the members were appointed to a four year term. This is likely the last meeting of this Task Force as currently constituted. First, Mr. Maguire stated that the Governor issued a proclamation recognizing their work. There are a few people he'd like to thank. First, he thanked every member of the Task Force. This has been a long hard road. He thanked all the members of the field. Mr. Maguire stated that none of this would have been possible without the work of the Department and staff. There are four staff people without whom these models wouldn't have been created: Marlene Johnston, Kevin Clark, Suzy Seibert, and Cindy Turner. Mr. Maguire stated that he had the farthest to come until he learned this information. Beyond that, there have been a lot of great staffers helping out: Irene Moreno, John Stollar, Adela Santa Cruz, Karen Butterfield, Kathi Montoya, Jackie Jones, Judy Boyer, and Kim Anderson. He said thank you to all those people. Mr. Maguire also thanked the elected leadership of Arizona. They basically appointed the members of the Task Force and sent them on their way. He appreciates the independence they gave to this Task Force to do what is right. The Legislature gave the Task Force a relatively prescriptive law, but then said go forth and do what is right. Mr. Maguire passed the proclamation around for the members to read.

Mr. Maguire presented plaques to each of the members of the Task Force. One of them states: "Presented to Dr. John Baracy, in grateful appreciation for your perseverance and outstanding

service on the Arizona English Language Learners Task Force.” Just for the record, no public funds were used to purchase these plaques.

Dr. Baracy stated that he would like to thank Mr. Maguire as Chairman of the Task Force. He stated that Mr. Maguire has been very even keeled and fair and has done a great job.

Ms. Dugan stated she agreed with Dr. Baracy’s statements and stated that Mr. Maguire could step into education policy. She stated that she admires his tenacity and passion for the English Language Learners Task Force.

Hs. Haver stated that one of her major accomplishments was nominating Mr. Maguire as Chairman.

6. Call to the Public

No slips were given to the Chairman.

7. Discussion of future meeting dates

Mr. Maguire stated that he doesn’t expect the Task Force to meet again until September.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Maguire stated that without objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 2:12 P.M.

Alan Maguire, Chairman
English Language Learners Task Force

Date